

WILLIAM B. MATCHETT.

JUNE 14, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. DRIGGS, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 835.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 835) granting a pension to William B. Matchett, have examined the same and the evidence relating thereto and respectfully report:

This bill as amended proposes to pension at \$12 per month William B. Matchett, of Washington, D. C., who was enrolled as chaplain of the Tenth Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry (McChesney's Zouaves) in April, 1861, and who served either as chaplain or in some other capacity until about the close of the war.

In the Fifty-third Congress the Senate passed a bill (S. 2696) granting this claimant a pension of \$20 per month, but same did not pass the House. In the Fifty-fourth Congress a bill granting this claimant a pension of \$20 per month passed the Senate (S. 480) and was reported favorably to the House, but was not reached on the Calendar. The Senate report in both the Fifty-third and Fifty-fourth Congresses is contained in the House report submitted by Mr. Kirkpatrick in the Fifty-fourth Congress, which is as follows:

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 480) granting a pension to William B. Matchett, having carefully considered the same, respectfully adopt the report of the Senate Committee on Pensions, and recommend the passage of the bill without amendment.

[Senate Report No. 1, Fifty-fourth Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 480) granting a pension to William B. Matchett, have had the same under consideration and beg leave to report as follows:

This case was examined by your committee during the last session of Congress and the passage of the bill recommended. The bill passed the Senate, but was not reached in the House of Representatives.

We adopt our former report, which is as follows:

[Senate Report No. 907, Fifty-third Congress, third session.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2696) granting a pension to William B. Matchett, have examined the same and report:

The petitioner says in his petition that he was enrolled as chaplain of the Tenth

Regiment New York Volunteers (McChesney's Zouaves) in April, 1861, after having helped to raise the regiment, and his commission was dated May 15, 1861; that after a time spent at Sandy Hook, New York Harbor, he went with the regiment to Fortress Monroe, Va., and encamped at Hampton on the "Roads" for a few months, and was then ordered to the fortress, which the regiment garrisoned about eleven months. There being no chaplain at the post, the petitioner occupied the pulpit of the church where the general command attended, first under Gen. B. F. Butler and Colonel Dimmick, of the Regular Army, then General Wool, and subsequently under General Mansfield, all now deceased; that while at Camp Hamilton the command was visited by terrific rain and wind storms from Hampton Roads, so that the tents were carried away in the night, the camp flooded with water, and the exposure brought on malarial fever, from which he did not recover for several months. The petitioner had a fall which placed him in the fort hospital, under Surgeon-General Cuyle, for several weeks.

After partial recovery he was called to New York to bury Lieutenant-Colonel Elder, and, the funeral occurring in the most inclement weather, he was continually wet to the skin, being on horseback. That with the exposure consequent he was again attacked with malarial fever, followed by chronic diarrhea, and from injuries sustained during the seven days' fight before Richmond and the scant supply of food. He was then taken to General McClellan's headquarters and attended by Surgeon McClelland for several weeks, in June and July, 1862, and by the hospital reports it is clearly shown was treated for chronic diarrhea at Trinity General Hospital at Washington, D. C., under charge and care of J. W. Hatch, M. D.

He has suffered repeated attacks during these years, which would be brought on by overexertion of body or the brain, and has fallen insensible, and scarcely now recovered from one of those attacks, his life being at times despaired of on account of nervous prostration and partial paralysis. There were two acts of Congress in his behalf, both relating to regulating the time when his service expired.

Your committee also submit copies of the action of the Thirty-eighth Congress, by certain joint resolutions, to be found on page 589 of United States Statutes at Large, vol. 15, of the first session Thirty-eighth Congress, entitled joint resolutions Nos. 44 and 52:

"No. 44. *Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the Paymaster-General of the United States be authorized and directed to adjust and pay to W. B. Matchett the amount due him as chaplain of the Tenth Regiment of New York Volunteers from the time up to which he was last paid to the time said regiment was mustered out of service.

"Approved June 20, 1864.

"No. 52. *Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, etc.*, That the above-entitled joint resolution shall be construed to adjust and direct the Paymaster-General of the United States to adjust the account of W. B. Matchett, chaplain of the Tenth Regiment of New York Volunteers, and pay him the amount of the pay and allowances of a chaplain for and during the period that said regiment was in the service of the United States and up to the time the same was mustered out of service, deducting the amount heretofore paid him as such chaplain.

"Approved June 28, 1864."

We again recommend the passage of the bill.

These acts were rendered necessary by an irregularity of muster, as shown by two communications between the Paymaster-General and Hon. James T. Hale, chairman of the Committee on Claims of the House, and on which the action of the House was based; and a letter from the Adjutant-General's Office shows the necessity of this bill for relief, instead of through the medium of the Pension Office.

There is no doubt whatever that this claimant is entitled to a pension, and the only question is as to the amount. After a careful review of the evidence and all the facts and circumstances, your committee is of the opinion that a pension of \$12 per month is fully justified by the evidence in the case, and the bill is therefore reported back with the recommendation that it pass when amended as follows:

In line 7, after the word "Volunteers," insert "and pay him a pension."

In line 7 strike out the word "twenty," and insert in lieu thereof the word "twelve."

Strike out all after the word "month," in line 8.